

SITUATION REPORT NO. 17
INCIDENT NO. 2001- 005
DATE: April 24, 2001 TIME: 3:30 p.m.

TO: Governor John Hoeven
State Capitol
Bismarck, N.D. 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring Flooding.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: No change from previous reports.
3. DAMAGES: The latest forecast, issued by the National Weather Service (NWS), calls for a third crest at Wahpeton due to heavy wet snow that fell in the southern portion of the Red River Valley this past weekend. Snowfall amounts ranged from six inches to one foot with a water equivalent around two inches. Forecasters expect the additional precipitation to result in a 15 to 16 foot crest at Wahpeton by April 28-29. The first crest, 16.96 feet, occurred on April 9, and the second, 16.21 feet, took place on April 13. A new crest is also expected at Fargo. River levels will drop slightly before rising to 30 to 31 feet by April 30-May 1. The river crested at 36.8 feet on April 14. Upstream at Lake Traverse on the Bois de Sioux, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will continue releasing 3,500 cubic feet per second (cfs) through April 27. Afterward, releases may be adjusted based on inflows. As a result, river levels will remain high throughout April and into early May. The forecast for the remainder of the week calls for mild, dry conditions with a chance of thunderstorms developing by the weekend.

The Red River at Wahpeton measured 13.43 feet today, a 0.06-foot decrease during the past 24 hours. The river at Fargo measured 28.96 feet, a 0.59-foot decrease during the past 24 hours. The level at Grand Forks measured 41.26 feet, a 0.57-foot decrease. The river at Drayton measured 41.22 feet, a 0.10-foot decrease during the past 24 hours. At Pembina, the river was approaching its crest, measuring 49.25 feet, a 0.07-foot increase during the past 24 hours.

A flood warning was reissued for the Wild Rice River at Abercrombie, where runoff from the recent snowstorm is expected to push the river above the 12-foot moderate flood stage by April 26. The five-day forecast calls for the river to rise to 16.2 feet on April 29. The level measured 9.6 feet today. The previous high this spring was 25.22 feet on April 10.

A flood warning has been canceled for the Pembina River at Natchez where the river rose to nearly 19 feet on April 23. The level measured 18.2 feet today; flood stage is 18 feet. At Walhalla, the river measured 10.3 feet; flood stage is 11 feet. The forecast calls for a slow fall.

A flood warning remains in effect for the Lower James River near Ludden where minor flooding continues. The level was slowly receding but is expected to

remain above flood stage until May. The river measured 13.5 feet this morning, a 0.1-foot decrease during the past 24 hours. Flood stage is 12 feet.

The Souris River also remains under a flood warning near Foxholm and from Towner to Westhope. The river at Foxholm may crest at 13 to 13.5 feet depending on releases from Lake Darling. The level this morning measured 12.7 feet; flood stage is 10 feet. At Towner, the river measured 54.2 feet; flood stage is 52 feet. The river was 0.6 feet above its 11-foot flood stage at Bantry, and the river measured 13.3 feet at Westhope where flood stage is 10 feet.

In Barnes County, officials received another damage report from a homeowner whose basement wall has collapsed.

A snowstorm on April 21-22 compounded water problems in Ransom County, where snowfall amounts ranged from seven to 12 inches. As a result of the storm, water was flowing over roads that had not previously been damaged by this spring's floodwaters.

Officials for the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians have reported that water has caused structural damage to homes and roads.

The April 23 North Dakota Crop Weather Report indicates that above normal precipitation across the state last week, which included heavy snow from this past weekend's storm, delayed the start of fieldwork. With this latest delay, planting progress falls further behind the average pace, according to the North Dakota Agricultural Statistics Service. The expected start for fieldwork is April 30. The five-year average starting date is April 24. Warm, dry weather is needed before farmers in most parts of the state can begin fieldwork. Topsoil moisture supplies were rated 1 percent short, 62 adequate and 37 percent surplus.

Two locations on state highways remain closed because of floodwaters. Those sites are N.D. Highway 66, from mile marker 138 to the Red River, and N.D. Highway 5, from mile marker 335 to the Red River. The N.D. Department of Transportation (DOT) reported that highways with water on the roadways and where traffic is allowed include five locations: N.D. Highway 11, from Fairmount to the Red River; N.D. Highway 54, from I-29 to Oslo; N.D. Highway 14, approximately 4.5 miles south of Anamoose; N.D. Highway 36, at mile marker 34, four miles west of Tuttle; and N.D. Highway 200, mile marker 257, west of Chaseley.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: No change from previous reports.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: The N.D. Department of Health recently issued two news releases related to flood cleanup efforts. The first warned of possible dangerous exposure to carbon monoxide through the use gas-powered equipment, such as power washers, generators and pumps, to clean up flooded homes. The second indicated that concerns about exposure to mold, which can develop following a

flood, should be addressed quickly in order to prevent illness. The release stated that when airborne mold spores are present in large numbers, they can trigger allergic reactions, asthma episodes, infections and other respiratory problems. In addition, exposure can cause development of an allergy to mold, resulting in long-term problems.

In 22 counties and three reservations, officials are accomplishing an initial damage assessment to be provided to state emergency management officials by April 30.

On April 24, the N.D. Civil Air Patrol provided an aerial surveillance flight of the Pembina River for the N.D. State Water Commission.

Officials for the city of Fargo and Cass County have delayed removal of clay dikes, based on the recent snowfall. Sand and sandbag removal began on April 23.

Grand Forks officials conducted their last flood meeting on April 23. They authorized the removal of clay dikes, although the city will leave some in place, based on the consent of the property owner and soil stability of the dikes. City workers will remove sand piles and sandbags.

McHenry County has upgraded its emergency declaration to a disaster declaration. The Tribal Chair of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians has issued a disaster declaration. The McLean and Ramsey County Commissions have issued emergency declarations.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No additional requests have been received.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER: Appropriate state and local emergency operations plans have been implemented.

Situation Reports published by North Dakota Emergency Management are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is <http://www.state.nd.us/dem>.

Douglas C. Friez, State Director